

Congress of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20515

July 27, 2020

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
3E446
Washington, DC 20310

Assistant Secretary James:

We write today regarding the Illinois Waterway 2020 Maintenance Closure and the importance of its timely completion. At the closure's outset, the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) informed stakeholders LaGrange's expected reopening would be September 30th, 2020. In light of recent updates, the Corps now expects completion later than scheduled and into October. Additionally, new discoveries at the Lockport Lock may necessitate future closures.

While we appreciate that unforeseen issues arise during maintenance closures, delays in completion threaten the agricultural economies of our congressional districts and require your utmost attention to avoid. Estimates for this Fall's harvest indicate large crop yields. As the local farmers in our districts rely upon the Illinois Waterway to ship crops to market, any further delay in completion of the maintenance could impact the marketing of a farmer's crop as well as reduce U.S. agriculture's competitiveness in foreign markets.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever the government should do all it can to promote certainty and economic growth. We ask that you prioritize completion of the maintenance to meet the original expected reopening and to avoid the need to induce future closures.

Thank you for your attention to this request and know that we greatly appreciate the Corps' efforts to maintain critical infrastructure vital to our districts.

Sincerely,



RODNEY DAVIS
Member of Congress



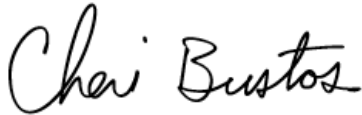
MIKE BOST
Member of Congress



ADAM KINZINGER
Member of Congress



DARIN LAHOOD
Member of Congress



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

CC: Major General Scott A. Spellmon, 55th Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers